

- 19 -

C L A I M S

1. Process to prepare simultaneously two or more base oil grades and middle distillates from a de-asphalted oil or a vacuum distillate feed or their mixtures by performing the following steps:

5 (a) hydrocracking the feed, thereby obtaining an effluent;

(b) distillation of the effluent as obtained in step (a) into one or more middle distillates and a residue boiling substantially above 340 °C;

10 (c) separating, by means of a further distillation step said residue into a light base oil precursor fraction and a heavy base oil precursor fraction;

(d) reducing the pour point of each separate base oil precursor fraction in two simultaneously and parallel operated catalytic dewaxing reactors obtaining a first and second dewaxed oil;

15 (e) hydrotreating the first dewaxed oil as obtained when dewaxing the heavy base oil precursor fraction in step (d);

20 (f) isolating from the second dewaxed oil from the light base oil precursor fraction from step (d) and the hydrotreated oil from step (e) two or more base oil grades.

2. Process according to claim 1, wherein the residue obtained in step (b) boils for more than 80 wt% above 340 °C and wherein in step (d) between 10 and 40 wt% of a heavy gas oil range fraction boiling below 400 °C, based on the combined first and second dewaxed oil, is prepared.

- 20 -

3. Process according to any one of claims 1-2, wherein between 20 and 40 wt% of the heavy base oil precursor fraction as obtained in step (c) is recycled to step (a).

5 4. Process according to any one of claims 1-3, wherein the 10 wt% recovery point of the heavy base oil precursor fraction as obtained in step (c) is between 420 and 550 °C.

10 5. Process according to claim 4, wherein the 10 wt% recovery point of the heavy base oil precursor fraction as obtained in step (c) is between 440 and 520 °C.

15 6. Process according to any one of claims 1-5, wherein the feed to step (d) also comprises a partly isomerised paraffin wax as obtained in a Fischer-Tropsch process and boiling in the heavy and/or light base oil precursor fractions boiling range.

20 7. Process according to any one of claims 1-6, wherein the weight hourly space velocities in the catalytic dewaxing step (d) when processing the light base oil precursor fraction is higher than the WHSV in the dewaxing step (d) when processing the heavy base oil precursor fraction.

8. Process according to claim 7, wherein the WHSV when processing the light base oil precursor fraction is between 1 and 5 kg/l/hr.

25 9. Process according to any one of claims 1-8, wherein the pressure at which the light base oil precursor fraction is dewaxed in step (d) is between 15 and 65 bars and the pressure at which the heavy base oil precursor fraction is dewaxed is between 100 and 250 bars.

30 10. Process according to any one of claims 1-9, wherein step (f) is performed on a mixture of the second dewaxed oil as obtained when processing the light base oil precursor fraction and the hydrotreated first dewaxed oil when processing the heavy base oil precursor fraction.